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AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 48TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO US Forces 96491

AVCA SGN AB OP

4 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968
(RCS CS FOR 65)

THRU: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Saigon
APO US Forces 96491

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
ATTN: ACSFOR
Washington, D.C. 20310

SECTION I
SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

1. COMMAND.

a. The unit engaged in operations in support of combat forces in the Republic of Vietnam on all ninety (90) days of the reporting period. Elements of the Group participated in Operations QUYET THANG, LAM SON and YELLOWSTONE.

b. Visitors:

13 February COL William W. Akers, ODCSLOG, DA
COL Charles A. Kennedy, ODCSLOG, DA

8 March GEN Frank S. Besson, CG USAMC
MG J. Hayes, Director of Supply, USAMC
BG J. Traylor, Director of Maintenance, USAMC
BG M. McD Jones, CG, USA Support Command, Saigon
Dr. J. Thomas (GS-18), Deputy for Research, USAMC
COL H. Braunstein, Secretary of General Staff, USAMC
COL G. Johnson, Deputy ACoS, G-4, Hq USARV

20 March LTG H. W. O. Kinnard, CG, USACDC
BG W. L. Element, Director of Doctrine, USACDC

FOR AT RD
68-154

18 March COL J. Blackwell, Chief of Services, O/ACSoF S, G-4,
USARV

4 April COL E. Castle, CO, Long Binh Post

18 April COL Robert A. Smoak, Deputy Commandant, USA Trans-
portation School, Fort Eustis, Va

2. PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION, MORALE AND DISCIPLINE

a. Civilian personnel. The local national authorization for the command was reduced from 365 to 156 by TDA published by USARV effective 1 March. Eighty one spaces were placed under reclama. Personnel occupying positions not under reclama will be transferred not later than 14 May. Personnel occupying spaces under reclama will be retained until 20 June, unless a final decision on this matter is received sooner.

b. Military Personnel.

(1) The organization was at approximately full strength from 1 March, when 150 drivers were provided by levy from units in the III and IV CTZ to help drive government-owned contractor-operated trucks until local nationals who had left their jobs during the TET Offensive returned to work. However, daily installation guard requirements were approximately 100 men and approximately 30 men a day were required to ride shotgun on convoy. The Group strength was required to support nearly a full refrigerator truck company with an augmentation of only 100 men. A TTP at Tay Ninh was established from Group strength and liaison elements at depots were established from Group strength. Accordingly, approximately two full light truck company equivalents were diverted from the TOE mission of the Group during the period.

(2) Casualties from enemy action:

Feb		Mar		Apr	
<u>WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>
12	2	3	0	2	0

(3) Awards and decorations:

	Feb	Mar	Apr
Legion of Merit	-	1	1
Bronze Star (Valor)	-	5	-
Bronze Star (Merit)	4	5	2
Army Commendation Medal	5	23	10
48th Group Certificate of Achievement	20	18	6

(4) The morale and state of discipline of the troops remained high, considering the very long hours drivers and mechanics must work. The hard, continuous work may be a reason for the good morale.

3. OPERATIONS.

a. Summary of Operations.

The TET Offensive disrupted 48th Group trucking operations, as it did operations of other US Forces in Vietnam during February. As convoy movements were delayed, 48th Group trucks were required to take up the workload formerly handled by contract trucks when local national drivers failed to report for work.

In March and April, convoy operations returned to normal and contract trucks went back into operation, although 48th Group was required to continue to provide some night drivers for contract equipment.

On 14 March, daily convoy operations to Vung Tau were initiated. A Class 12 bridge on the route limits the convoys to 2½ ton trucks, and convoys are limited to 15 vehicles. This run is made without division protection. The 48th Group furnishes its own security, with on-call air and artillery support available from the division operating in the area.

Convoys were dispatched to Phouc Vinh on 8 and 10 March and on 11 and 13 April. No combat losses were experienced during these operations.

Casualties from enemy action were light. Two trucks were lost to mines on convoy operations, but the only personnel casualties occurred in ambushes along Route 1A from Long Binh to Saigon during February and March.

Emphasis upon retrograde movements, which depend primarily upon the capability of the division concerned to prepare and backload cargo, increased during the period, with, of course, a resulting improvement in equipment utilization rates. The first target was the 25th Division's retrograde backlog accumulated during the TET Offensive. Approximately 3482 S/T were hauled from Tay Ninh and Cu Chi between 26 March and 30 April.

During the period following the TET Offensive, physical defenses of TC Hill at Long Binh and of the contract equipment compound at Thu Duc were improved significantly. Wire barricades were raised to three-tier, two-row concertina, and fighting bunkers were relocated, improved, and increased in number.

b. Performance.

(Statistical Summary)

During the operational quarter, the following performance was recorded:

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<u>MONTH</u>	<u>MILES*</u>	<u>SHORT TONS</u>	<u>TON MILES</u>	<u>PASSENGERS</u>
February	786,053	127,818	2,490,865	22,541
March	1,176,361	168,800	2,847,125	52,597
April	<u>1,033,369</u>	<u>143,836</u>	<u>3,449,983</u>	<u>53,303</u>
TOTALS	2,995,783	440,454	8,787,973	128,441

* Includes empty and loaded mileage

4. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION.

a. The buildup of forces in I CTZ required the transfer of two companies from the 48th Group. On 12 Feb 68 the 363rd Trans Co (Lt Trk) was transferred to the Da Nang Support Command (Prov) on GO 92, 1st Logistical Command dated 21 Feb 68. The 446th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) was reassigned to Qui Nhon in February. The 572nd Transportation Company (Medium Truck) (minus) was placed on TDY to Da Nang on 3 March and was transferred on GO 338 US Army Support Command, Saigon dated 13 April 68. Two platoons of the 572nd were reattached to 48th Group. Two platoons of the 10th Transportation Company are at zero strength, pending availability of equipment to refill the company. The 48th Group has recommended that the two platoons of the 572nd be transferred from 48th Group to the parent unit at zero strength and that the personnel and equipment of these platoons be allocated to fill the 10th Transportation Company.

b. Conversion of the 86th Transportation Company from a $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton light to a medium company, directed by GO 69, HQ, USARPAC, 5 Feb 68, will make up part of the reduction in lift capacity resulting from transfer of the 446th and 572nd Companies. Effective conversion of the 86th awaits the required new equipment. The balance of the loss in capacity will be made up when the 10th Transportation Company is brought back to full strength as a cargo company.

5. INTELLIGENCE.

None

6. LOGISTICS.

During April, a concerted effort was launched to recover ground lost in equipment maintenance during the heavy commitments of the fall and winter and to prepare improved facilities before the next rainy season. Maintenance procedures and equipment condition showed some improvement. A salvaged 5000 gallon tanker was acquired, fitted with a spreader bar, and put into operation spreading black oil on roads and motor pools in the 48th Group compound. Some new shops were put into operation. Self-help projects provided a cement-floored tire shop and covered trailer maintenance facilities.

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Out of an authorized 379 5 Ton tractors, excluding the new authorization for the 86th Trans Co., the Group was short about 80 during the period. Nearly the entire authorized inventory of 540 M127 trailers, excluding the 86th, was on hand, but during most of the period the trailer deadline rate was about 25%, primarily for lack of 11.00 x 20 tubes, left and right outer lug nuts, and landing legs. During the last two weeks of April, supplies were received and the deadline was reduced significantly.

48th Group was assigned responsibility for physical custody of the RO/RO trailer fleet in III and IV CTZ during April. The objective is to bring the RO/RO trailers under better inventory and utilization control, provide systematic maintenance, and reduce the number of trailers held in country.

7. OTHER.

None

SECTION II

COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PERSONNEL. None

2. OPERATIONS.

a. Equipment utilization.

(1) Item. How can utilization of 48th Group equipment be improved?

(2) Observation: Rough analysis indicates that 48th Group 2½ ton trucks are operating at a cost of approximately \$0.68 per ton mile, 5 ton tractors with M127 trailers at about \$0.48 per ton-mile. Some part of this cost is attributable to such combat overhead as maintaining a relatively large installation security guard, but the figures generally indicate the order of costs. The high cost of 2½ ton trucks results from the low tonnage hauled per dollar of driver pay and initial investment. It is evident that 2½ ton trucks should not be used in general support of highway transport operations, except for troops movements. The fact that 5 ton cargo trucks operate at lower ton-mile cost than medium trucks results from the fact that 5 ton cargo trucks are used for high productivity movement of ammunition which assures a good tonnage lading, in a comparatively efficient local hauling cycle. The 5 ton cargo trucks are used relatively efficiently, while the mediums are used to a large extent on convoy operations which produce only one turn around in a 24 hour period.

Improvement of utilization is a problem of the total loading-hauling-unloading system. Individual actions which have been initiated to improve utilization include:

(a) Establishment of procedures under which Movements Control Center, instead of making firm commitments which are tantamount to tying up a truck for a shift, gives 48th Group a slate of lift requests to be handled with opportune lift in addition to allocating a block of lift for local purposes.

(b) 48th Group expeditors have been stationed at principal loading and unloading sites to coordinate use of trucks.

(c) Convoys returning without loads contact the port by radio to arrange pick-up of opportune cargo for haul into Long Binh. Other trucks passing the port coordinate with the 48th Group representative, when practicable, to pick up opportune cargo.

(d) Under direction of Saigon Support Command, retrograde programs from division areas are being systematized to reduce empty truck mileage.

(e) Action has been initiated to secure more productive equipment.

b. Equipment productivity.

(1) Item. How can productivity of 48th Group resources be increased?

(2) Observation. The productivity of trucks assigned to 48th Group is limited by cargo capacity and by loading and unloading capacities of ports, depots and other transportation users. An ENSURE requirement has been initiated for 5 ton capacity wagon-type full trailers, to be towed by 5 ton cargo trucks. The trailers will double the effective capacity of the trucks by taking advantage of the rated towed load capability, and will improve operational flexibility by permitting the buildup of an unloading backlog on trailers, rather than trucks, until the point is reached at which the trailer loadings will keep the installation operational while the trucks are diverted to other work.

An ENSURE request has also been initiated for 45-foot, 30 ton capacity semitrailers to be issued to the 86th Transportation Company, when it is converted from a light to a medium company. The trailers will be used on hard roads in the Saigon-Long Binh area and will be closely controlled to ensure optimum utilization. One company, equipped with a single set of these trailers, should be able to do at least twice the work of a medium company equipped with M127A1 trailers. In addition to increasing productivity, the trailers will reduce congestion in ports and depots.

(3) Evaluation. The effectiveness of the requested new equipment will be measured when it is received and placed in operation.

(4) Recommendations. That the two ENSURE requests referred to in paragraph (2) be approved and delivery of the equipment expedited.

3. TRAINING.

None

4. INTELLIGENCE.

None

5. LOGISTICS.

(1) "Roll Bar" for cargo Trucks.

(a) Item: How can drivers be protected from injury in roll-over accidents?

(b) Observation. When a soft-top cab truck rolls in an accident the driver is likely to be crushed in the cab. An apparent solution to this problem has resulted from 48th Group's fitting 2½ ton and 5 ton cargo trucks with heavy frames of angle iron at the forward end of the cargo bed, to provide protection for the driver against forward-shifting loads. The frames extend to approximately the height of a hard-top cab. In a recent accident, the truck rolled over, but the frame served as a roll bar and saved the driver from serious injury.

(c) Evaluation. The heavy metal frame at the forward end of the cargo bed has saved a driver from serious injury or death in at least one case. The reinforcement of the truck bed forward end is necessary when conventional cargo beds are fitted with inserts to make flat decks for handling palletized cargo by forklift. If future cargo trucks are delivered with dropside cargo beds, a strong front bulkhead will be essential, since those trucks will be used specifically for handling palletized or containerized cargo. It will be reasonable to build the front bulkheads high enough and strong enough to serve as "roll bars".

(d) Recommendations. That future cargo trucks be equipped with a heavy cargo bed head-frame, which can serve as a roll bar as well as a protection against forward-shifting loads.

(2) Safety Color Painting of Cargo Trucks.

(a) Item. How can rear end collisions in Vietnam be reduced?

(b) Observation. Many of the accidents involving US trucks and Vietnamese vehicles occur when the local vehicles run into the US vehicles. In an effort to reduce these accidents and the high death toll among local nationals resulting from them, 48th Group requested and received authority to paint back frames of trucks, M127A1 trailers, and 5000-gallon tankers yellow with black markings. Trucks are being painted as rapidly as practicable. The Commanding General, Saigon Support Command, extended the procedure to cover all USASUPCOM, Saigon Trucks.

(c) Evaluation. The safety color painting increases visibility of cargo vehicles in the day and at night, and appears to improve depth perception of the following driver. Future accident experience will be the subject of statistical analysis to determine the effect, if any, of the painting.

(d) Recommendation. That the back ends of cargo trucks operating in metropolitan areas of Vietnam be painted yellow with black marking.

(3) Back-up lights on Truck Tractor, M52 series:

(a) Item: How can potential safety hazards and unnecessary equipment damage be reduced?

(b) Observation: The drivers of the 48th Transportation Group (MT) are often required to back up tractors and connect to semitrailers in congested areas where lighting is inadequate. A good portion of couplings to semitrailers is performed during hours of darkness. Difficulty is experienced by the driver in aligning the fifth wheel on the tractor with the kingpin on the semitrailer due to improper or inadequate lighting. If an attempt is made to connect to the trailer with improper alignment, possible injury or damage may result. In an effort to reduce potential safety hazards and equipment damage, 48th Group requested and received authority to install a backup light in the rear of M52 series Tractors to assist in coupling and uncoupling of tractors during hours of darkness. Installation procedures will preclude any possibility of the back-up light being switched on during blackout operation. Backup light are being installed as rapidly as necessary parts are received.

(c) Evaluation: The Installed Back-up light increases the visibility for the vehicle operator in coupling and uncoupling operations during hours of darkness thus virtually eliminating potential hazards and equipment damage.

(d) Recommendation: That Back-up light become standard equipment on all tractors with fifth wheels.

6. ORGANIZATION:

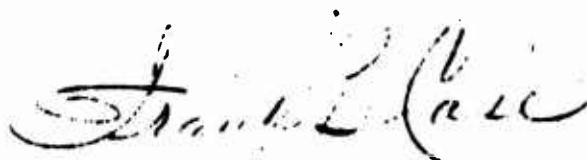
None

7. OTHER:

None

1 Incl
Organizational Chart

FRANK B. CASE
Colonel, TC
Commanding



AVCA SGN GO (4 May 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968
(RCS CSFOR-65) (48th Transportation Group-Motor Transport)

HQ, US Army Support Command, Saigon, APO San Francisco 96491

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, APO 96475

Commander-in-Chief, US Army Pacific, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff, Forces Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968, of the 48th Transportation Group (Motor Transport), is forwarded in accordance with the provisions of para 9, AR 1-19.

2. Reference: Section II, para 2b(2); Both ENSURES mentioned are being staffed in this headquarters.

3. Lessons Learned, observations, and recommendations are concurred in by this command.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: LB 2604



FREDERICK R. HUCK
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

AVCA GO-0 (4 May 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, 48th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 is forwarded.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

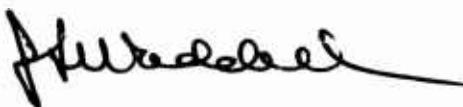
a. Reference Section II, paragraph 5(1): Unit has been notified that an EIR should be submitted. No action required by higher headquarters.

b. Reference Section II, paragraph 5(2)(d): No action required by higher headquarters pending evaluation of this procedure.

c. Reference Section II, paragraph 5(3): Unit has been notified that an EIR should be submitted. No action required by higher headquarters.

3. Concur with the basic report as modified by this indorsement. The report is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



TEL: LBN 2684

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J.S. WADDELL

1ST. AGO

Commander, General

Copy Furnished
48th Trans Gp

AVHGC-DST (28 May 68) 3d Ind

CPT Arnold/ms/LBN 4485

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968
(RCS CS FOR 65)

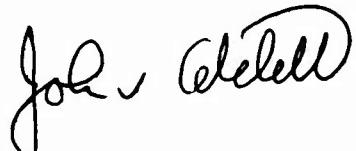
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 **30 MAY 1968**

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned
for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 48th
Transportation Group (Motor Transport) as indorsed.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



JOHN V. GETCHELL
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
HQ, 1st Log Cmd
HQ, 48th Trans Gp

GPOP-DT (4 May 68) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ 48th Trans Gp (Motor Transport) for
Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 14 JUN 1968

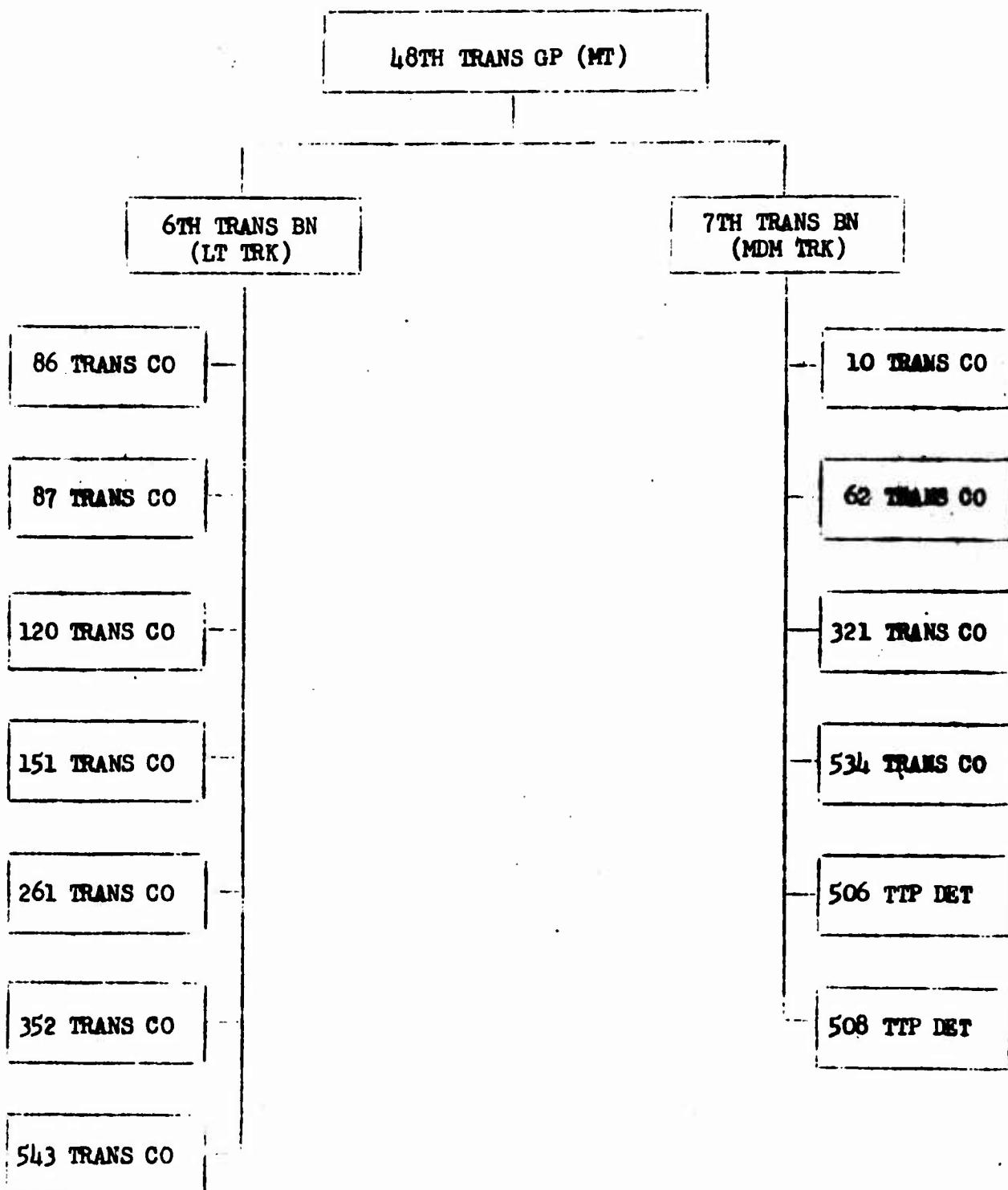
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



K. F. OSBOURN
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG



Organizational Chart as of 4 May 1968

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

16

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED
	2b. GROUP

3. REPORT TITLE

Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 48th Transportation Group
(Mtr Trns) (U)

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations. Ending 30 April 1968

5. AUTHORISI (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 48th Transportation Group (Mtr Trns)

6. REPORT DATE 4 May 1968	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 14	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	8a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 682154	
8b. PROJECT NO. N/A	8b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
9. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
10. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT		